

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-12 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, Claims 1, 9 and 11 are currently amended, Claims 8, 10 and 12 are canceled without prejudice, new Claims 13-22 have been added, and Claims 2-7 remain unchanged.

Applicants note that the Examiner did not initial GB 2 342 596 on the original Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) and identified the reference as incomplete. Applicants are unclear why the reference was considered incomplete. Only a single cover sheet for the GB reference was available at the time of filing and was submitted with the IDS. Regardless, Applicants herewith submit a supplemental Information Disclosure Statement including U.S. Patent No. 6,342,084, issued to Pezzaniti, which corresponds to GB 2 342 596. Applicants respectfully request consideration of this reference.

The Examiner rejected Claim 11 under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite. Claim 11 has been amended to overcome the rejection.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Zelmer (DE 198 02 345). Claims 1-2, 4-6, 8-9 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Thode (DE 44 15 005) (corresponds to US 5,914,416). Claims 1-8 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC §102(a) as being anticipated by Yip (US 6,125,501). Claims 1-2, 4-7, 10 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Prahl (US 4,682,384). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yip in view of Kuwahara (US 3,454,978).

Independent Claim 1 has been amended and now recites a device for sucking up particles to be collected, the device comprising: at least one collection chamber for accumulating the particles; a suction device; at least one reception chamber storing said suction device; a partition separating said collection chamber from said reception chamber and having a partition surface, said partition having an inlet orifice formed therein for channeling an air stream from said collection chamber to said suction device, said inlet orifice of said partition coupling said collection chamber to said suction device in said reception chamber; an air guide funnel having an entry surface forming a part of said partition surface; an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and

projecting in a direction toward said collection chamber; and a filter bag disposed in said collection chamber for accumulating the particles.

Zelmer does not disclose, among other things, “an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction of said collection chamber disposed in said funnel bottom,” as recited in Claim 1. Rather, as shown in Fig. 3 of Zelmer, the guard wall (28) is connected to the input filter (24), not the funnel element. Also, the guard wall (28) of Zelmer projects from the input filter (24) in a direction away from the dust container (3), not “toward said collection chamber,” as recited in Claim 1.

Zelmer does not disclose, among other things, “a filter bag disposed in said collection chamber for accumulating the particles,” as recited in Claim 1. Zelmer provides no disclosure that the dust container (3) is a filter bag. Zelmer describes the dust container (3) as a “Staubbehälter”, meaning a rigid box or canister. Zelmer provides no disclosure of the dust container (3) being a filter bag or having providing any filtering effect. Zelmer includes a separate filter (24) that filters the dust particles from the air. Therefore, all the elements recited in Claim 1 are not disclosed in Zelmer.

For these and other reasons, Zelmer does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-7, 9 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Thode does not disclose, among other things, “a filter bag disposed in said collection chamber for accumulating the particles,” as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, all the elements recited in Claim 1 are not disclosed in Thode.

For these and other reasons, Thode does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-7, 9 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Yip does not disclose, among other things, “a filter bag disposed in said collection chamber for accumulating the particles,” as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, all the elements recited in Claim 1 are not disclosed in Yip.

For these and other reasons, Yip does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-7, 9 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Prah1 does not disclose, among other things, "an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward said collection chamber," as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, all the elements recited in Claim 1 are not disclosed in Prah1.

For these and other reasons, Prah1 does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-7, 9 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

New independent Claim 13 recites a vacuum cleaner, comprising: a collection chamber for accumulating particles; a suction device generating an air flow; a reception chamber housing the suction device; a partition separating the collection chamber from the reception chamber and defining an inlet orifice receiving the air flow from the collection chamber; an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice, the inlet orifice having a substantially rectangular cross-section and the exit orifice having a substantially circular cross-section; and an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward said collection chamber.

The prior art, particularly Zelmer, Thode, Yip, Prah1 and Kuwahara, does not disclose a vacuum cleaner as recited in Claim 13. More specifically, the prior art does not disclose, among other things, an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice, the inlet orifice having a substantially rectangular cross-section and the exit orifice having a substantially circular cross-section, and an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward said collection chamber.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of independent Claim 13. Claims 14-18 depend from Claim 13 and should be allowed for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

New independent Claim 19 recites a vacuum cleaner, comprising: a collection chamber for accumulating particles; a suction device generating an air flow; a reception chamber housing the suction device; a partition separating the collection chamber from the reception chamber and defining an inlet orifice receiving the air flow from the collection chamber; an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice, the inlet orifice having a substantially rectangular cross-section and the exit orifice having a substantially circular cross-section; an intervention guard element including a dome-shaped ribbed body connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward the collection chamber; and a filter bag disposed in the collection space for accumulating the particles.

The prior art, particularly Zelmer, Thode, Yip, Prahl and Kuwahara, does not disclose a vacuum cleaner as recited in Claim 19. More specifically, the prior art does not disclose, among other things, an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice, the inlet orifice having a substantially rectangular cross-section and the exit orifice having a substantially circular cross-section; an intervention guard element including a dome-shaped ribbed body connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward the collection chamber; and a filter bag disposed in the collection space for accumulating the particles.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of independent Claim 19. Claims 20-22 depend from Claim 19 and should be allowed for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 1-7, 9, 11 and 13-22 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted



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